

NORTHALLERTON

Urban District Council.

MEDICAL OFFICER'S

ANNUAL REPORT

For the

Year ending December 31st, 1921.

W. BAIGENT, M.D., Medical Officer of Health.

NORTHALLERTON :

PRINTED AT THE OFFICE OF CHARLES W. SMITHSON, LTD.



Northallerton Urban District.

NORTHALLERTON,

MARCH 1ST, 1922.

Medical Officer's Annual Report

For the Year ended December 31st, 1921.

MR. CHAIRMAN AND GENTLEMEN,

I have the honour of presenting to you the Annual Report of your Medical Officer for the year ending December 31st, 1921. No doubt you will be aware the Ministry of Health have issued new instructions with regard to these reports. In future they are to be of two kinds, Ordinary Reports and Survey Reports. The former are of a brief character, covering the vital statistics and important sanitary defects or changes during the year; and the latter of a more comprehensive nature every five years, covering more completely the conditions in the district which do not change from year to year. As this is the first Ordinary Report, it will be of a brief nature and will include the statistics in a tabulated or contracted form, and in the order as set out in the appendix issued by the Ministry of Health.

1. General Statistics.

Area (acres)	...	...	...	3653.
Population (1921)	...	...	...	4791.
Number of inhabited houses (1921)	...	...	...	1101.
Number of families or separate occupiers (1921)	...	...	...	1101.
Rateable Value	...	...	...	£30,210.
Sum represented by a penny rate	...	...	...	£80.

2. Extracts from Vital Statistics of the Year.

	Total.	M.	F.	
Births { Legitimate	102	63	39	} Birth Rate (R.G.) 23.37.
{ Illegitimate	10	7	3	
Deaths ...	54	29	25	Death Rate (R.G.) 11.27.

Number of women dying in, or in consequence of childbirth.	{ from sepsis	...	Nil.
	{ „ other causes	...	Nil.

Deaths of Infants under one year of age per 1,000 births :—

Legitimate, 71.42. Illegitimate, 17.85. Total, 89.28

Deaths from Measles (all ages)	...	...	Nil.
„ Whooping Cough, (all ages)	...	...	Nil.
„ Diarrhoea (under 2 years of age)	...	...	Nil.

No unusual or excessive mortality has required comment during the year.

The precise causes of the infantile deaths are as follows :—

Legitimate.		Illegitimate	
Age.	Cause.	Age.	Cause.
7 hours	Premature Birth.	13 days	Pemphagus
1 day	Anencephalus	3 months	Premature Birth.
18 days	Convulsions		
1 month	Premature Birth		
1 „	Pemphagus		
1 „	Bronchitis		
3 „	Congenital Heart Disease		
9 „	Convulsions		

The area is to be congratulated on the fact that none of these deaths are due to diseases caused by food contamination, such as diarrhoea, or to other diseases due to insanitary surroundings, or neglect on the part of the parent or nurse.

3. Notifiable Diseases during the Year.

Disease.	Total Cases Notified.	Cases admitted to Hospital.	Total Deaths.
Diphtheria	—	—	—
Scarlet Fever	10	8	—
Enteric Fever (inc. Paratyphoid)	—	—	—
Puerperal Fever	—	—	—
Pneumonia	—	—	—
Other diseases generally notifiable:			
Encephalitis Lethargica	1	—	1
Other diseases notifiable locally	—	—	—
Tuberculosis:			
(a) Pulmonary { M.	5	3	2
{ F.	—	(Sanatorium)	—
{ Total	5	—	—
(b) Non-pulmonary	—	—	—
Opthalmia Neonatorum	No cases notified.		

The following is the analysis, under age groups, of the Scarlet Fever cases.

Age.				Age.			
Under 1 year	...	—		10 to 15	...	...	2
1 to 2	...	—		15 to 20	...	...	2
2 to 3	...	1		20 to 35	...	...	2
3 to 4	...	—		35 to 40	...	...	—
4 to 5	...	—		65 and over	...	...	—
5 to 6	...	3				Total	10

The total Tuberculosis deaths number 8, five being pulmonary cases, two tubercular meningitis, and one general tuberculosis. Of these eight deaths, only two were notified.

Notification of tuberculosis in this district, like many others, is not efficient. This is due I think to the many changes in the past with regard to notification of this disease, which have had the effect of confusing practitioners. No action has been taken beyond a verbal reminder.

4. Causes of Sickness.

The only noteworthy sickness was the outbreak of influenza which developed during the closing weeks of the year. In this district it was not of a very severe type, but differed somewhat from former outbreaks of this disease. The most noteworthy symptom beyond the usual ones, was the pain complained of at the back of the neck, passing in a few days lower down the spine and finally to the thighs and legs. Many cases had rashes, mostly of measles type, changing to a fine rash resembling scarlet fever in 24 to 36 hours. There were not many cases with serious complications like pneumonia. Relapses after apparent recovery were common, and much weakness was noticable after recovery.

The ten cases of Scarlet Fever occurred during the first six months of the year. From June to the end of the year, no case of infectious disease was notified in the area.

5. Nursing Arrangements, Hospitals, etc., available for the district.

This area, for its size, is well provided with hospitals, nurses, etc.

Nursing in the home. (a). For general nursing, there is a visiting district nurse, managed and supervised by a committee. For over 20 years this committee has carried on this work, which is supported by voluntary contributions. During the present year a gift of £50 from the Red Cross Society was made towards the cost of working the scheme. As it is managed by a small private committee, needless to say it is run on economical lines. Should there be an outbreak of illness of an alarming character, and the work be beyond the powers of the nurse, extra help of a voluntary nature

could be quickly organised. Should the case be serious and require the whole-time services of a trained nurse, the Rural Nursing Association in the town supply nurses for the purpose of nursing the poor in their own homes. This Association is old established, and supplies nurses to the town and rural areas. Unfortunately the taste for nursing of this kind is on the wane during recent years, much like the domestic problem, and the young woman of to-day would apparently prefer to remain at home and be nursed, rather than be trained to nurse others.

(b). No provision is made for nursing infectious diseases in the home free of charge by the District or other nurses.

Midwives. The District Nurse acts as midwife for the district. It has not been necessary to ask the Local Authority to assist financially.

Treatment Centres. There is a Tuberculosis Dispensary in the town held at the Rutson Hospital, and attended by the Tuberculosis Officer each Wednesday at 3 p.m. There is no dispensary for the treatment of Venereal diseases; such a dispensary is not necessary, as the amount of such diseases in the area is exceedingly small.

Hospitals provided or subsidised by the Local Authority or by the County Council.

- (1). Tuberculosis. Three beds for non-pulmonary cases of tuberculosis, mostly bone diseases, are provided in the Rutson Hospital in the town, and are available for patients from the county. These beds are provided and paid for at a fixed rate per week under the County Tuberculosis scheme. Pulmonary cases from this area requiring sanatorium treatment are sent to Aysgarth Sanatorium, and children to Morris Grange Sanatorium.
- (2). Maternity. Patients, married or un-married, requiring hospital accommodation are received into the Rutson Hospital as private patients. This is not subsidised by any Authority. Other cases are admitted into the Union Infirmary.
- (3). Children are admitted into the Rutson Hospital, and no special hospital or special ward is necessary.

- (4). **Fever.** Two hospitals for infectious diseases are situated in this area outside the town. They adjoin each other. One is provided by the Urban District and the other by the Rural District Council. For many years they have been worked conjointly, so that if necessary two classes of infectious diseases, in two sexes, can be isolated at the same time. This arrangement is economical, convenient, and has worked smoothly to the benefit of both councils.
- (5). **Smallpox.** A small isolated building at the back of the Fever Hospital could be used for Smallpox in an emergency. Should this prove insufficient, further arrangements could be quickly improvised.
- (6). **Other Hospitals.** The Rutson Hospital, situated in the town, receives general cases suitable for a cottage hospital. The accommodation is ample for all present requirements. Beyond the three beds reserved for tubercular cases above spoken of, this Hospital is not supported by the Local Authority or County Council. There is also an infirmary at the Union Workhouse in this area, which receives suitable patients from the Urban and Rural areas. There is no other institutional provision beyond the Union or Infirmary in this area for un-married mothers and illegitimate infants. Homeless and other children in the charge of the Guardians are received into the Workhouse or into a home provided by the Guardians in the town, according to the necessity of the case.
- (7). **Ambulance facilities.** (a). For infectious cases a special cab is provided at the expense of the Urban District Council. (b). For non-infectious and accident cases a covered motor ambulance is provided free of charge, or paid for in whole or in part, according to the capacity of the patient.

6. Laboratory Work.

When pathological or bacteriological examinations are required, the Council have given sanction for these to be done by laboratories making a speciality of this work. It has not been necessary to have any examinations made during the year.

Diphtheria antitoxin and other sera are provided by the Council to those patients who are not in a position to provide their own.

List of Adoptive Acts, Byelaws and local regulations. The 1907 Act, and other adoptive acts have not been adopted by the Council. The Byelaws adopted are the Model Byelaws of the Local Government Board. There are no special local regulations.

7. Sanitary Administration.

In last year's annual report the number of W.C.'s, dustbins, privy ashpits, and those requiring depositing on the roadway before carting, during 1912 and 1920 were tabulated as follows :—

			1912.	1920.
W.C.'s	...	...	370	524
Dustbins	...	...	223	245
Privy Ashpits	...	...	278	186
Privy Ashpits deposited on road before carting	...	...	20	20

During the year under review further progress has been made to the following extent :—

W.C.'s provided	...	25
Dry Dustbins	...	18
Ashpits removed	...	16

which makes the existing numbers at the end of 1921 approximately as follows :—

			1912.	1920.	1921.
W.C.'s	...	...	370	524	549
Dustbins	...	...	223	245	263
Privy Ashpits	...	...	278	186	170
Deposited before carting			20	20	20

Much requires to be done in this direction, especially with regard to those which are deposited on the roadway before carting away. This fouling of the surface is objectionable and dangerous to health in any case, but is doubly so of recent years, with the increasing dust due to rapid and heavy motor traffic. The present

high cost of structural alterations and plumbing, as well as general financial conditions make it difficult to proceed with this work as quickly as desirable.

Sewage Disposal. The Sewage Disposal Works continue to give a very good effluent, and are highly efficient as they have been since their erection. They treat all the sewage of the town, with the following exceptions:—

- (1.) Drainage from the Tanyard.
- (2.) Eight Cottages near the Tanyard.
- (3.) Drainage from Mount Pleasant.
- (4.) Drainage from Layfield's Cottages.

These are fully described in previous annual reports, as well as the condition of the beck into which the drains discharge, which is most in evidence during the summer months.

It should be noted the Railway Cottages at the North End have been re-drained and connected to the town sewer, so that the pollution of the beck has been reduced by this amount.

Work of Sanitary Inspector. Inspection of places where food is prepared, which are few in number, has been carried out when necessary.

Slaughter Houses.

		1914.	1920.	1921.
Number	...	6	6	6

They are mostly in unsuitable positions and are not of modern construction.

Arrangements for Disinfection. The area has no proper disinfecting apparatus by superheated steam or otherwise. The only disinfection is by fumigation with sulphur or formalin in a chamber provided for the purpose.

Dairies, Cowsheds and Milkshops. The dairies and cowsheds have been inspected as usual. As reported last year, these places are generally fairly well kept, but like most places where cattle are housed in the country, there is room for improvement, not only in the cleanliness of the byre, but also in the methods by which milking operations are carried out.

8. Public Health Staff.

One Medical Officer of Health (part time), and one Sanitary Inspector (whole time). The usual contribution is made to the salary of both under the Public Health Acts. There are no assistant officers, specialised inspectors, or special nurses employed, and none are necessary in this area. The Inspector also acts as Surveyor and Water Inspector.

9. Housing.

(a). Four houses, privately built under the subsidy scheme, commenced in 1920 have been completed. Plans were submitted for one other, which was not proceeded with.

(b). No houses were built under the municipal housing scheme, although an excellent site of 7 acres was purchased for this purpose three years ago, and the Council were most anxious at the time to proceed with the work of erection.

1. Unfit dwelling-houses.

(1) Dwelling-houses inspected for housing defects under the Public Health or Housing Acts, and recorded under the Housing Regulations, 1910	293.
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(2) Number of dwelling-houses found to be in a state so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation	Nil.
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(3) Number of dwelling-houses found not to be in all respects reasonably fit for human habitation	Nil.
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2. Remedy of defects without service of formal notice.

Number of defective dwelling-houses rendered fit in consequence of informal action by the Local Authority or their officers... Nil.

3. Action under Statutory Powers.

A. Proceedings under Section 28 of the Housing, Town Planning &c., Act, 1919	Nil.
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B. Proceedings under Public Health Acts	Nil.
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C. Proceedings under sections 17 and 18 of the Housing, Town Planning, &c., Act, 1909	Nil.
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10. Water Supply.

Notwithstanding the unprecedented drought, the springs from which the main portion of the town's water supply is derived, continued to yield water in quantities beyond expectation. This, together with the impounded water in the upper reservoir, made Northallerton less anxious about an adequate quantity of water available, than the majority of towns. Naturally the reservoir was many feet below its normal level, and this was not made good, and the springs did not yield the full quantity, until the very close of the year or soon into the new year. For some years, the quantity of water capable of delivery to the town, has been a diminishing amount, due to deposits in the pipes to such an extent as to seriously decrease their calibre. The question of the internal scraping of the pipe line from Oakdale Works to the town has been under consideration for some time. This was carried out in March, with results much better than anticipated. The increased results were 60,000 gallons per day, which is equal to one third of the supply. It is now possible to take full advantage of the increased storage impounded in the upper newly constructed reservoir.

Thanking the Chairman, members of the Council, and all the officers for their kindness and support during the year which has closed.

I am,

Your obedient servant,

WILLIAM BAIGENT,

Medical Officer of Health.